

CLAIMS:

1. A communication device, comprising:
 - a front housing having a display panel;
 - a first keypad housing including a first keypad being functionally connected to the front housing and having a plurality of keys arranged in a first configuration; and
 - a second keypad housing including a second keypad being functionally connected to the front housing and having a plurality of keys arranged in a second configuration;
 - wherein the first configuration is different from the second configuration;
 - wherein the front housing, first keypad housing, and second keypad housing are adapted to overlap and stack in a nested configuration in which the first and second keypads are concealed by the front housing, and the front housing is movable relative to each of the first and second keypad housings from the nested configuration to an extended position in which at least one of the first and second keypads is exposed.
2. The communication device of claim 1, wherein the second keypad housing is movable relative to the first keypad housing from the nested configuration to an extended position.
3. The communication device of claim 2, wherein the second keypad is exposed by moving the front housing from the nested configuration to an extended position, and the first keypad is exposed by simultaneously moving the front housing and the second keypad housing to an extended position.

4. The communication device of claim 1, wherein the first keypad is exposed by moving the front housing from the nested configuration along a first path of travel, and the second keypad is exposed by moving the front housing from the nested configuration along a second path of travel, the second path of travel being different than the first path of travel.
5. The communication device of claim 4, wherein the first path of travel is transverse to the second path of travel.
6. The communication device of claim 5, wherein the first and second paths of travel are linear.
7. The communication device of claim 1, wherein the plurality of keys of the first keypad are arranged in a QWERTY configuration and the plurality of keys of the second keypad are arranged in a telephone keypad configuration.
8. The communication device of claim 1, wherein the plurality of keys of the first keypad are arranged in a game pad configuration and the plurality of keys of the second keypad are arranged in a telephone keypad configuration.
9. The communication device of claim 1, wherein the display panel displays characters in at least two orientations.

10. The communication device of claim 9, wherein the at least two orientations include a first orientation and a second orientation, the plurality of keys of the first keypad are arranged in a third orientation and the plurality of keys of the second keypad are arranged in a fourth orientation, wherein the first orientation is the same as the third orientation and the second orientation is the same as the fourth orientation.

11. The communication device of claim 1, including a plurality of softkeys on the front housing that are operational when either the first or second keypad is exposed.

12. The communication device of claim 1, wherein the front housing, the first and second keypad housings are telescopically connected to one another.

13. The communication device of claim 1, wherein the front housing further comprises a speaker and a microphone.

14. A communication device, comprising:

a front housing having a display panel that can display characters in a first and second orientations relative to the front housing;

a first keypad housing having a first keypad functionally connected to the front housing, the first keypad having keys having a third orientation and arranged in a first key configuration; and

a second keypad housing having a second keypad functionally connected to the front housing, the second keypad being structurally arranged between the front housing and the first keypad housing, and telescopically connected to the front housing and the first keypad housing, the second keypad including keys having a fourth orientation and arranged in a second key configuration;

wherein the first key configuration is different from the second key configuration;

wherein the front housing, the first keypad housing and the second keypad housing are adapted to telescopically slide to overlap and stack in a nested configuration in which the middle and first keypads are concealed underneath the front housing, and the front housing can telescopically slide relative to each of the first and second keypad housings from the nested configuration to an extended position to selectively expose one of the first and second keypads;

wherein the first and third orientations are the same and the second and fourth orientations are the same; and

wherein the display panel displays characters in the first orientation when the first keypad housing is in the extended position and the display panel displays characters in the second orientation when the second keypad housing is in the extended position.

15. The communication device of claim 14, wherein the second keypad is exposed by sliding the front housing from the nested configuration to an extended position, and the first keypad is exposed by simultaneously sliding the front housing and the second keypad housing to an extended position.

16. The communication device of claim 14, wherein the first key configuration is a telephone key configuration and the second key configuration is a QWERTY key configuration or a game pad configuration.

17. The communication device of claim 16, wherein the communication device has a width (W) and a length (L) that is greater than the width, and the keys of the second keypad are oriented along the length of the device, and the keys of the first keypad are oriented along the width of the device.

18. The communication device of claim 14, wherein the second keypad is exposed when the front housing slides from the nested configuration along the width of the device, and the first keypad is exposed when the front housing slides from the nested configuration along the length of the device.

19. The communication device of claim 14, wherein the front housing, first keypad housing and second keypad housing each have a generally-rectangular shape and are all approximately equal in size.

20. The communication device of claim 14 , wherein the front housing and second keypad housing are connected by opposed pairs of cooperating slides arranged on widthwise-extending edges of the front housing and second keypad housing, and the second keypad housing and first keypad housing are connected by opposed pairs of cooperating slides arranged on lengthwise-extending edges of the first and second keypad

housings.

21. The communication device of claim 14, wherein the front housing further comprises a speaker and a microphone.

22. A communication device, comprising:

a front housing having a display panel that can display characters in a first and second orientations relative to the front housing;

a first keypad housing having a first keypad functionally connected to the front housing and having keys having a third orientation and arranged in a QWERTY key configuration or a game pad configuration; and

a second keypad housing having second keypad functionally connected to the front housing, the second keypad housing being structurally arranged between the front housing and the first keypad housing, and telescopically connected to the front housing and the first keypad housing, the second keypad including keys having a fourth orientation and arranged in a telephone keypad configuration;

wherein the front housing, the first keypad housing and the second keypad housing are adapted to telescopically slide to overlap and stack in a nested configuration in which the first and second keypads are concealed underneath the front housing, and the front housing can telescopically slide relative to each of the first and second keypad housings from the nested configuration to an extended position to selectively expose one of the first and second keypads;

wherein the first and third orientations are the same and the second and fourth

orientations are the same;

wherein the display panel displays characters in the first orientation when the first keypad is in the extended position and the display panel displays characters in the second orientation when the second keypad housing is in the extended position; and

wherein the front housing and second keypad housing are connected by opposed pairs of cooperating slides arranged on the widthwise-extending edges of the front housing and second keypad housing, and the second keypad housing and first keypad housing are connected by opposed pairs of cooperating slides arranged on the lengthwise-extending edges of the first and second keypad housings.

23. The communication device of claim 22, wherein the front housing further comprises a speaker and a microphone.